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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 ABUJA 001446

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DOE FOR CAROLYN GAY

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TAGS: PGOV PINR NI

SUBJECT: NIGERIAN SENATE RECEIVES LIST OF MINISTERIAL NOMINEES

ABUJA 00001446 001.2 OF 003

Classified By: Acting Political Counselor Heather Merritt for Reasons 1 .4 (b and d).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: The Nigerian Senate received a list of 34 ministerial nominees from President Yar'adua on July 5 after weeks of public speculation and security vetting. The list, which does not include any reference to portfolios, is comprised predominantly of technocrats, politicians, and party officials, and includes four former Obasanjo administration ministers. Most of the nominees on the current ministerial list are uncontroversial and are likely to be confirmed without difficulty. However, some nominees may be substituted in coming weeks to assuage inter and intra-party wrangling. END SUMMARY

¶2. (C) The Nigerian Senate received a list of 34 ministerial nominees from President Yar'adua on July 5. The press in the weeks immediately prior claimed at least four lists were in circulation and that the Nigerian Executive had been keeping the list close-hold until nominees were announced on the Senate floor. Observers had expected the Senate, which reconvened on June 25 after a three week recess, to receive the list early the previous week. President Yar'adua, however, said he delayed submitting the list to the Senate to allow Nigerian law enforcement and security services to perform security background investigations on the ministerial candidates. The Senate will begin ministerial confirmation hearings on July 10.

¶3. (C) The nomination process began in late May when Yar'adua required each state governor to submit to the Presidency three names. President Yar'adua then selected from among these to form his list of ministerial nominees. Political observers expressed concern that the list would be heavily skewed towards former state governors and advisers of former President Obasanjo.

¶4. (C) The list released on July 5 is comprised predominantly of technocrats, politicians, and party officials, and includes four former Obasanjo administration ministers. It does not make any reference to what portfolios each minister will occupy. With the exception of these few notable former ministers and high-level technocrats, most of the nominees are relative unknowns. No former state governors are among the nominees and Benue, Jigawa, Kebbi,

and Kaduna States are not yet represented among the ministerial candidates. Gombe and Kano States have two candidates each.

Technocrats:

15. (U) Adamu Maina Waziri - Yobe State
Waziri is a former technocrat and losing 2007 PDP gubernatorial candidate for Yobe State. He served as Special assistant to the Minister of Agriculture and as Special Assistant to the President under Obasanjo. He also led the controversial Petroleum Technology Development Fund (PTDF).

16. (U) Dr. Shamsudden Usman - Kano State
Usman is an economist and currently Deputy Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN). Prior to this he served as Managing Director of NAL Merchant Bank and for the Kano state Government as Director of Budget. Usman received his MSc and PhD from the London School of Economics and briefly taught economics at Ahmadu Bello University.

17. (U) Charles Ugwu - Imo State
An engineer, Ugwu is the immediate past chairman of the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN). The courts disqualified him from the 2007 Imo State gubernatorial elections.

18. (U) Mrs. Diezani Alison-Madueke - Bayelsa State
Alison-Madueke is currently the Director of External Relations for Shell Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria (SPDC). Her husband is a retired admiral and Chief of Naval Staff during the military era. She is a graduate of Howard University in Washington, DC.

ABUJA 00001446 002.2 OF 003

19. (U) Yayale Ahmed - Bauchi State
Ahmed is the current Head of Civil Service of Nigeria and started his career in Bauchi State government.

110. (U) Bode Augusto - Lagos State
Augosto served as Director General of the Budget Office of the President. He is a former partner at PriceWaterhouse and founded Augusto & Co Ltd., the first credit rating agency in Nigeria licensed by the Securities and Exchange Commission.

111. (U) Chief Sarafa Isola - Ogun State

PDP Officials:

112. (U) Chief Ojo Maduekwe - Abia State
Maduekwe is currently National Secretary of the PDP and held a cabinet post under President Obasanjo.

113. (U) John Odey - Cross River State
Odey is the PDP Publicity Secretary.

114. (U) Ahmed Mohammed Gusau - Sokoto State
Gusau is the Special Adviser to the PDP National Chairman. He served as Deputy Governor in Sokoto State and as administrator of the Nigeria Labor Congress (NLC).

Former Ministers:

115. (U) Dr. Hassan Muhammad Lawal - Nasarawa State
Lawal is the former Minister of Labor and Productivity.

116. (U) Abba Sayyadi Ruma - Katsina State
Ruma served as Minister of education under President Obasanjo and as Secretary to the Government of Katsina State.

¶17. (U) Dr. Aliyu Umar Moddibo - Gombe State

Moddibo is a US-trained journalist and served as Minister of Commerce and as Special Assistant to the Chief of Staff under President Obasanjo. In the private sector, Moddibo worked with the National television Authority (NTA) and was chairman of Peugeot Automobile Nigeria (PAN).

¶18. (U) Halima Tayo Alao - Kwara State

An architect, Alao was former Minister of Health under President Obasanjo.

Politicians:

¶19. (U) Sanusi Daggash - Borno State

Daggash served in the Nigerian Senate from 2003 to 2007 and in the House of Representatives from 1999 to 2003.

¶20. (U) Ambassador Bagudu Hirshe - Plateau State

Hirshe has worked extensively at both the state and federal level. He served as Nigeria's High Commissioner to Namibia in 1999 and has been involved in partisan politics since the early 1990s. He studied at Ahmadu Bello University and Zaria and received training in journalism at the BBC in London.

¶21. (U) Prince Adetokunbo Kayode - Ondo State

¶22. (U) Senator John James Akpanudoedehe - Akwa-Ibom State

Others:

¶23. (U) Dr. Aliyu Idi Hong - Adamawa State

¶24. (U) Mrs. Ekipwhre Grace - Delta State

¶25. (U) Igwe Aja-Nwachukwu - Ebonyi State

¶26. (U) Maj. Gen. Godwin Abbe (rtd) - Edo State

ABUJA 00001446 003.2 OF 003

¶27. (U) Prince Dayo Adeye - Ekiti State

¶28. (U) Mrs. Fidelia Akubata Njeze - Enugu State

¶29. (U) Hajia Aishatu Jibril Dukku - Gombe State

¶30. (U) Ahmed Garba Bichi - Kano State

¶31. (U) Gabriel Yakubu Aduku - Kogi State

¶32. (U) Abulrahman Hassan Gimba - Niger State

¶33. (U) Senator Akinlabi Olasunkanmi - Osun State

¶34. (U) Chief Aderemi W. Babalolo - Oyo State

¶35. (U) H. Hodein Ajumogobia - Rivers State

¶36. (U) Ibrahim El-Sudi - Taraba State

¶37. (U) Tijjani Yahaya Kaura - Zamfara State

¶38. (U) Prince John Okechukwu Emeka - Anambra State

Comment:

¶39. (C) Most of the nominees on the current ministerial list are uncontroversial and are likely to be confirmed without difficulty. However, some nominees may be substituted in

coming weeks to assuage inter and intra-party wrangling as political parties agreeing to participate in the Government of National Unity (GNU) seek representation in Federal Government ministries. Furthermore, some state governors may balk at certain selections leaving their states' ministerial slots vacant, either because they are unsatisfied with President Yar'adua's nominee or pressured by local party members to select a consensus candidate. Nominees that are former ministers are from the North and are not seen as Obasanjo cronies, and there are few PDP stalwarts on the list, which helps to ease concerns that Obasanjo would attempt to stack the ministries with his supporters.

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